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Chicken ordinance goes into effect later this year

Monday, Aug. 19, 2013 – Hampton's new chicken-keeping ordinance – approved by City Council Wednesday night – doesn't go into effect until later this year, giving the city time to establish the permit process.

Once that process is established, anybody who wants to keep up to four hens in their backyard – no roosters allowed – can apply for a permit from the Treasurer's office at 1 Franklin St.

The permit/advance approval is to ensure that residents don't spend money on a chicken coop that's in the wrong place or doesn't meet city standards. The fee will be \$25.

The ordinance also says:

- No more than four chickens may be kept on lots with a single-family residence, and no chickens are allowed on townhomes, duplex, condominium, apartment or manufactured housing park properties.
- Chickens have to be kept for domestic purposes no commercial activity, including selling eggs or chicken for meat is permitted.
- Chickens must have a covered, predator-proof shelter that is ventilated, provides adequate sun, shade, and protection from the elements, and is easily cleaned. The shelters have to be located in the back yard and be at least 25 feet from any neighboring residences or businesses.
- Shelters must be kept in a sanitary condition and cleaned on a regular basis.
- All feed has to be kept in a secure container or location to keep from attracting rodents and other animals.
- Chicken litter and waste can't be stored or stockpiled.

Hampton Animal Control will be responsible for investigating and either approving or denying applications. Violating any provision of the new ordinance could result in the revocation of a permit. Violation is also punishable by a fine of not less than \$250.